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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3457th meeting of the Security Council, held on 15 November 1994, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation concerning Western Sahara", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council notes the report of the Secretary-General dated 5 November 1994 (S/1994/1257). It shares the Secretary-General's view that the launching of the identification and registration of potential voters on 28 August 1994, in the presence of the observers as agreed, marked a significant step towards the fulfilment of the United Nations mandate on Western Sahara.

"The Security Council calls on the two parties to maintain their cooperation with the Secretary-General and MINURSO in their efforts to implement as soon as possible the Settlement Plan in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Council.

"The Security Council is, however, concerned about the slow speed of the identification process, in particular the fact that only a very small proportion of the potential voters have been identified and interviewed to date. While recognizing the difficulties involved, including the handling of a large number of last-minute applications, the Council urges the two parties to exert all possible efforts to facilitate MINURSO's work and urges the earliest possible deployment of the Identification Commission staff already approved by the General Assembly (resolution 48/250 B of 13 July 1994) in order to accelerate this process.

"The Security Council welcomes the Secretary-General's decision to visit the region later this month, and hopes that on this occasion he will be able to report significant progress towards implementing the Settlement Plan and holding the now long-overdue referendum. It looks forward to receiving his report following this visit and following the report of the technical team, charged with reassessing the logistic and other requirements for possible deployment of MINURSO at full strength. In the light of that report, including information on progress achieved in the work of the Identification Commission as well as other aspects relevant to

the fulfilment of the Settlement Plan, the Council hopes to be able to take appropriate decisions on the organization and timing of the referendum. In doing so it strongly believes that there must be no further undue delay in the holding of a free, fair and impartial referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in accordance with the Settlement Plan."